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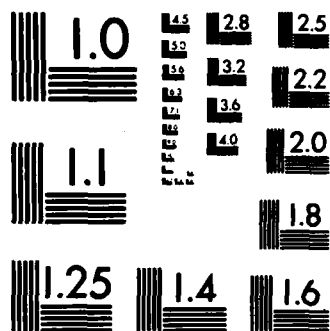
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SYSTEMATIC CORPORATE PLANNING AT DTIC

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R. RUSSELL PARRIS

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<p>The Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) has recently committed itself to a long-range corporate planning process. The purpose of this technical report is to describe this corporate planning process, to document those steps DTIC has taken to implement the corporate plans, and to present lessons learned for use in future planning endeavors.</p>				
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PREFACE

This publication describes a systematic corporate planning process developed within the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC). DTIC has committed the personnel and resources necessary to make this corporate planning process an effective management tool. The steps DTIC has taken to implement the corporate plans and the lessons learned along the way are also presented.

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The success of any organization in the public or private sector depends upon, among other things, successful planning and effective implementation of those plans. Knowledge gained through long-range planning enables an organization to deal with budget changes, changes in personnel skill requirements or any other anticipated major transitions an organization may undergo. Long-range planning also prepares an organization to take full advantage of opportunities and improvements that may occur in the future.

The Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) is the central point within the Department of Defense (DoD) for acquiring, storing, retrieving and disseminating scientific and technical information (STI) to support the management and conduct of DoD research, development, engineering and studies programs. It is also the hub of a distributed STI network bringing together many decentralized technical library information centers which acquire, store, retrieve, and disseminate information to their specific communities. Thus, DTIC serves a leadership role in connecting those with a need for information with those who have the information without requiring all documents to be centrally located. DTIC is also the operational manager for DoD Information Analysis Centers (IACs) which provide DoD components and contractors with access to technical subject experts and quality engineering analysis services. DTIC has recently committed itself to a systematic long-range corporate planning process in order to carry out this responsibility more effectively. It is hoped that long-range planning will enable DTIC to be the innovator in information technology by being better prepared to take advantage of the state-of-the-art in the information transfer field.

The Corporate Planning Process

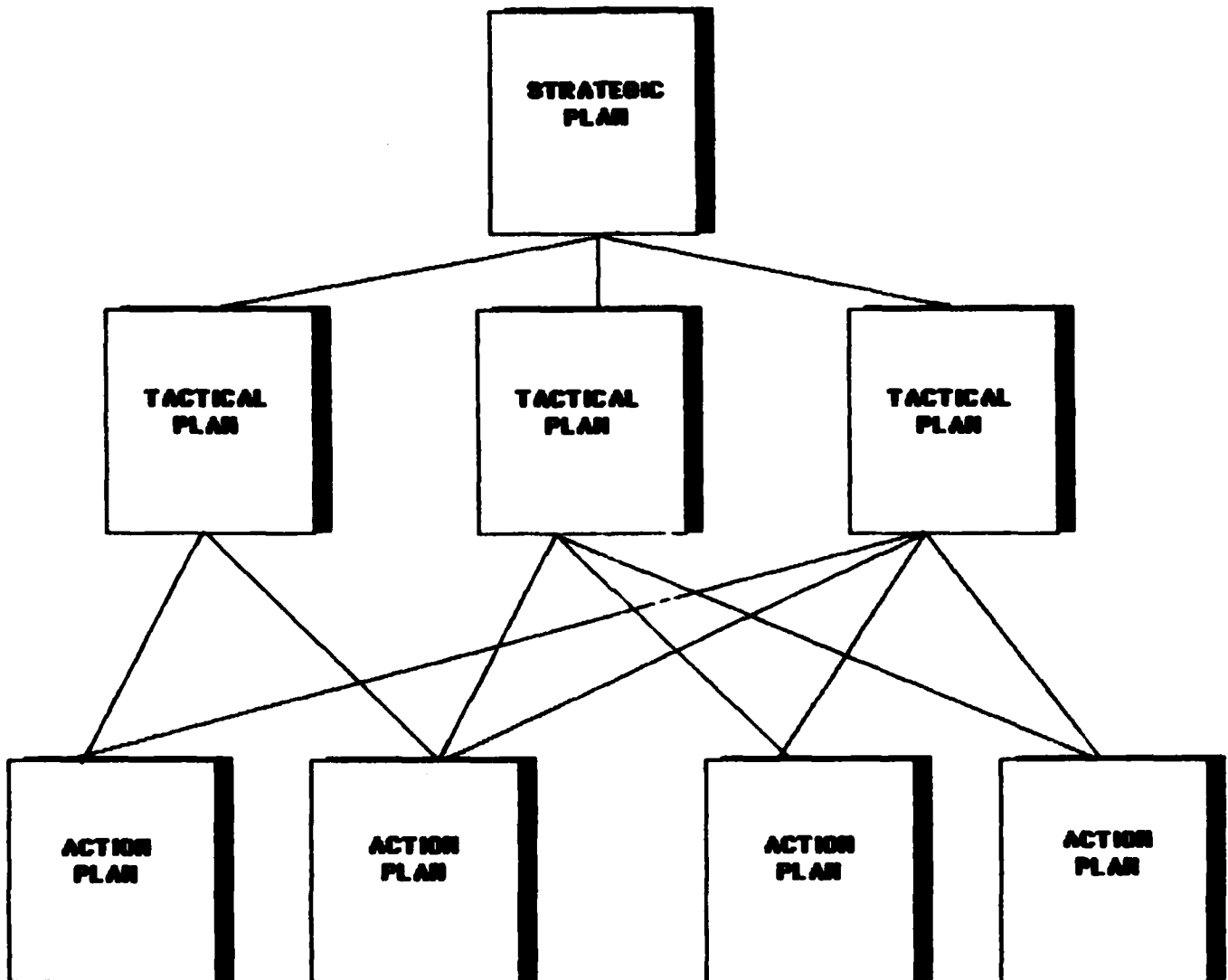
The management staff at DTIC had been planning for the future for as long as DTIC and its predecessors existed, but this planning was not controlled. That is, resources were committed to perform special efforts, but there was very little communication about, or accounting of, resource commitments, and thus little knowledge of resource availability. Neither the benefit to users of these special efforts nor the success of the planning was being determined.

DTIC had also developed long-range plans through the years; some were developed in-house and some by contractors, but these plans were rarely implemented. Therefore, in an effort to control planning, a Corporate Planning process was initiated at DTIC. Corporate Planning is here defined as coordinated and consolidated organization-wide planning efforts in three phases, including long-, mid-, and short-range planning. Phase one of the Corporate Planning process is the development of the Strategic Plan, which is the long-range plan that identifies the future environment that an organization anticipates. Phase two of the process is the development and writing of Tactical Plans in support of the Strategic Plan goals. The Tactical Plans are mid-range plans that identify the direction an organization will follow to bridge the gap between the present operating environment and the future. Phase three is the assignment, preparation and performance of Action Plans, which are short-range plans that implement or translate into action both the Strategic Plan and the Tactical Plans.

The Corporate Plan hierarchy is depicted in Figure 1. Corporate Plans are developed from the top down in this hierarchy and are implemented from the bottom up.

Figure 1

The Corporate Plan Hierarchy



The Strategic Plan - Phase One

In 1983, an ad hoc committee, the Long-Range Planning Group, was assembled and tasked to develop a Strategic Plan. The resulting document, called "DTIC 2000-A Corporate Plan for the Future" (AD-A 143 900), was published in July, 1984. The plan describes the national and DoD conditions and the technological environment within which DTIC will most likely operate over the next 15-20 years. It also relates this future environment to long-range goals for DTIC in order that DTIC may serve the information needs of the defense research and development community. The long-range plan is intended to give broad direction for the anticipated major changes of the future and provide guidance for more specific subordinate implementing plans. "DTIC 2000" contains 11 goals and 34 subgoals. It is a live document which will be updated every 3 years or more often, if necessary.

"DTIC 2000," the Strategic Plan, was only the beginning of the Corporate Planning system at DTIC. DTIC next needed to develop tactics that would guide the organization into the future and help the organization to gain control of those major efforts that are currently underway by relating them to the goals outlined in this Strategic Plan.

Tactical Plans - Phase Two

A Tactical Plan Format was developed by the Long-Range Planning Group, approved by the Administrator and Directors at DTIC, and published in June, 1985. The format guidelines are flexible and designed to help identify the major areas that should be considered in the development of a Tactical Plan. The Tactical Plan Format identifies six major areas:

- (1) the Strategic Plan goals and subgoals supported by the Tactical Plan;
- (2) background;
- (3) analysis;
- (4) the Tactical Plan itself including objectives, tasks, obstacles to achievement, and strategies to overcome obstacles;
- (5) Tactical Plan milestone charts; and
- (6) summary resource charts.

The Tactical Plan must identify at least one goal in the Strategic Plan that it supports. Each Tactical Plan is then implemented by any number of Action Plans, the next level down in the hierarchy. Conversely, it is possible for an Action Plan to implement more than one Tactical Plan goal. It is important to note that the scope of all plans in the Corporate Planning process should not be constrained in any way by organizational boundaries. Tactical Plans, ideally, should cross Directorate lines anytime there are advantages.

The development of Tactical Plans provides the bridge in the planning structure that is needed by DTIC's managers to relate those major projects already underway to the future as described in the Strategic Plan. Eventually the Corporate Planning process will enable DTIC managers to gain management control of major projects, decide which projects should be pursued and which projects do not adequately support the Strategic Plan, and budget for the plan rather than planning for the budget, as is the practice today.

Action Plans - Phase Three

An Action Plan, the most specific level of the Corporate Plan hierarchy, is a major effort or major project, either planned or underway. An Action Plan is a short-range plan that implements some portion of one or more Tactical Plans and thereby changes the environment of the organization. Up to this point in the Corporate Planning process, Strategic and Tactical Plans have been developed, but since these plans have not yet been implemented the functions and operations of the organization have not changed. Tactical Plan goals and Strategic Plan goals are implemented by the performance of Action Plans, as shown by the structure of the Corporate Plan hierarchy. Since plans are only effective when they are implemented successfully, phase three, the Action Plan phase of the Corporate Planning process, is extremely critical.

The Action Plan itself will contain the following 11 data elements.

1. Action Plan Title - the title reflects the Action Plan objective.
2. Action Plan Number - this five-digit number is assigned by DTIC-L to identify the program(s) involved. A unique subsidiary cost code will be assigned to capture the cost of each plan.
3. Action Plan Objective - the results desired or the product to be delivered is described.
4. Strategic and Tactical Goals - the Strategic Plan goals and subgoals and the Tactical Plan goals and subgoals that the Action Plan implements are identified by number.
5. Current Situation - the current environment is described.
6. Plan of Action - how the stated Action Plan objectives will be met is described.
7. Plan Schedule - all milestones required to accomplish the Action Plan are listed with estimated start and completion dates.
8. Resources -
 - Part A - Person-power - estimated number of person-hours required to complete each milestone.
 - Part B - Dollar Resources - estimated funding required to complete the Action Plan.
9. Background Material - all accumulated background material that supports the Action Plan is enclosed.
10. Action Officer - names and signatures of all participants and their supervisors is provided to show concurrence. The Director of DTIC-L also coordinates on Action Plans.

11. Approving Official - the Administrator or Deputy Administrator approves or disapproves Action Plans.

1986 Planning Efforts at DTIC

Since DTIC had not been staffed for a full-time planning effort up to this point in time, most of the work involved in long-range planning was performed by ad hoc committees. When the planning function was officially assigned to the Office of Policy, Plans and Resource Management (DTIC-L), a new committee was established to carry on the work begun by the Long-Range Planning Group which wrote "DTIC 2000." This new committee, the 1986 DTIC Planning Committee, consisted of representatives from the Directorate of Document Services (DTIC-F), the Directorate of Data Base Services (DTIC-H), the Office of User Services (DTIC-B), the Office of Information Systems & Technology (DTIC-E), and chaired by the Organization and Mission Control Division (DTIC-LP), which had been tasked with the planning function. The committee's job was to begin implementation of the Strategic Plan; the process they followed is described below.

In order to bring the Strategic Plan and other planning-type efforts into an organized and controlled planning system, the specific need for individual Tactical Plans had to be addressed. The many unorganized major efforts had to be identified and brought together under one or more Tactical Plans that would support the Strategic Plan. Also, these major efforts had to be arranged in some logical fashion, and those of immediate concern would become the first to be developed into Tactical Plans. This phase of the planning process is often a difficult transition period for an organization because new long-, mid-, and short-range plans must be implemented and merged with existing nonroutine projects and efforts. An organization cannot simply cease all ongoing major efforts and instantly implement new plans.

The first task of the 1986 DTIC Planning Committee was to identify all major efforts already underway, including approved major projects. In order to do this the Planning Committee interviewed all DTIC's Directors and other key staff. The Directors were asked to identify major projects that were planned for FY86 and FY87, indicate any reorganizations or major physical moves planned for that timeframe, and specify all other non-routine efforts of some magnitude that they were planning to do, were actually doing, or would like to do within the timeframe.

The results of these interviews were compiled into a list of major efforts either planned or underway in FY86 or FY87. Major efforts were listed separately by each directorate. Efforts appeared on the list only under the directorate with primary responsibility for their completion, even if in some cases the same efforts were reported by more than one directorate. The list also showed other offices of corollary interest, and indicated whether efforts were funded or not funded in FY86 and FY87. Each effort was related to one or more of the goals in the Strategic Plan.

In this first draft, no attempt was made to prioritize the major efforts. While compiling the list, however, the Planning Committee observed and discussed relationships which seemed to exist among DTIC major efforts. As a result, the efforts were "clustered" both within each directorate and across directorate lines. The basis for this clustering of efforts was their common support for a program, system, or objective. Within some clusters, it was observed that certain efforts needed to be completed at nearly the same time to obtain the desired results. In other clusters, one or more efforts depended upon the completion of another effort (or efforts) within the cluster before they could be completed. The Planning Committee hoped that clustering the efforts would simplify the choice of Tactical Plans to be

developed. Major efforts or clusters of efforts were to be selected from the list, and, from them, Tactical Plans were to be developed to bridge the planning gap between the Strategic Plan and these ongoing efforts.

The final decision on which Tactical Plans were to be developed, and which directors were tasked with the preparation of those Tactical Plans, was made by the Administrator after recommendations by the DTIC Steering Committee. The DTIC Steering Committee, which is composed of the heads of designated Principal Staff Elements (PSEs) and chaired by the Administrator, exists to provide advice, evaluation and assistance to the Administrator/Deputy Administrator on projects and programs effecting DTIC's plans, prioritization, resources and mission accomplishment. Ultimately the recommendations on which Tactical Plans are needed would be made by the same group of DTIC managers who would also be tasked with the preparation of those Tactical Plans. Any additional information needed for the recommendations made by the DTIC Steering Committee was available from the 1986 Planning Committee.

This first draft of major efforts, grouped by office of primary responsibility and clustered with similar efforts, was submitted to the DTIC Steering Committee, but it was found to be unacceptable. While there was a valid purpose for this approach, that is, to enable each Director to check all major efforts within his/her responsibility for accuracy and completeness, the format was not suited to the task at hand: identifying topics for Tactical Plans. Therefore the Planning Committee decided to present the major efforts, grouped under the subgoal from the Strategic Plan that each related to (major efforts would be repeated as many times as necessary under each subgoal applicable), in order to pull together those

efforts which could logically be translated to Tactical Plans. In fact, during this process, a number of broad areas emerged as appropriate areas for Tactical Plans, and the Planning Committee detailed them for consideration by the Steering Committee as possible candidates. It also became apparent that this regrouping of major efforts by the subgoals in the Strategic Plan eliminated the tendency to develop Tactical Plans strictly within organizational boundaries. Candidate Tactical Plans were submitted as an appendix to this new list of major efforts with an accompanying list of the Strategic Plan subgoals which the Planning Committee believed were applicable to each Tactical Plan.

This second draft was acceptable to the DTIC Steering Committee, and DTIC's Administrator assigned the development of four Tactical Plans from the candidates submitted by the Planning Committee. The Tactical Plans were prepared in the weeks preceding the conference, and presented in draft form at the 1986 DTIC Planning Conference, held 13-15 May 86 in Springfield, Virginia.

The Planning Conference

Each year DTIC holds a Planning Conference which is attended by the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Directors, Staff Office Chiefs, and the corporate planning staff. During past conferences designated staff presented plans that they developed according to assignment by the Administrator. The theme for the 1986 DTIC Planning Conference was "Planning to Reach Customers". Usually the conference is held out of town in order to get away from job interruptions, but due to budget constraints, the 1986 conference was held locally. The four assigned Tactical Plans were presented for the first time at the 1986 Planning Conference. The draft Tactical Plans were critiqued by conference attendees and defended by the presenter. The

agenda for the conference, which was compiled by the 1986 DTIC Planning Committee, also included presentations by a number of guest speakers, including Dr. Alan Burman from the Office of Management and Budget, who spoke on future trends in R&D funding in the Defense budget, and Mr. Joseph Howe from the Office of Personnel Management, who spoke on recent changes and planned major modifications in personnel policies and issues. These guest speakers provided useful information for DTIC management to consider in planning for the future.

At the close of the Planning Conference, the Administrator assigned several action items including tasking the Office of Policy, Plans and Resource Management (DTIC-L) with establishing dates for finalizing the four draft Tactical Plans presented at the conference. Finalization of the Tactical Plans includes:

- (1) determining duplication and overlap, and clarifying similar areas covered in the four Tactical Plans to bring them together into four clearly-focused Tactical Plans;
- (2) converting the oral presentations to the prescribed written format;
- (3) coordinating with all DTIC Directors and management staff; and
- (4) approval by the Administrator and Deputy Administrator.

After the Tactical Plans have been approved, the Administrator will assign Action Plans to individual Directors which, when performed, will implement the Tactical Plans. In the years ahead a process similar to this will again be followed in order to identify and develop all necessary Tactical Plans.

The Corporate Planning Control System (CPCS)

If DTIC is to continue to be an effective technical information service organization in a future of decreased funding, DTIC must also become more effective at preparing and executing its budget. This requires an effective, controlled planning system; therefore, DTIC has designed the Corporate Planning Control System (CPCS), a top-down, three-phase approach to corporate planning. Phase one of the CPCS is the Strategic Plan, which outlines where planning research indicates DTIC should be in 15 to 20 years. Phase two is the Tactical Plans that outline the roads DTIC will follow to move from the present environment to the future environment that is described in the Strategic Plan. Phase three involves Action Plans, which are non-routine efforts of some magnitude that DTIC has been calling major projects, MBO goals, system change requests, etc. Tracking the performance of the Action Plans will be automated in the CPCS.

There will be monthly reporting of the status of Action Plans to the Office of Policy, Plans and Resource Management (DTIC-L) via the CPCS. Each responsible Director will also report directly to the Administrator on the status of performance of Action Plans at the Quarterly Management Review. The CPCS will provide information to DTIC-L that is needed to relate the expenditure of personnel and dollar resources to the progress realized at any stage of an Action Plan and determine if the milestone schedules are being met. The system will raise flags when an Action Plan falls behind schedule or progress is not keeping pace with resources expended. It will become apparent when a particular Action Plan is not meeting expectations, or when an Action Plan is using resources that would provide greater benefits if

applied in a different area. The CPCS will also provide current information, by DTIC directorate, as to how many person-hours are obligated to performing non-routine Action Plan efforts throughout DTIC.

When an Action Plan is completed, the responsible Principal Staff Element (PSE) will notify DTIC-L. DTIC-L will then do a benefits analysis to determine the value of the Action Plan to DTIC's mission and the effectiveness of DTIC's Corporate Planning system. The deliverable result of the Action Plan will also be analyzed by DTIC-L for policy impacts, standard operating procedure needs, and organization and position management impacts.

Summary

DTIC has committed staff and resources to a systematic Corporate Planning process. Thus far, in the implementation of this process, a number of lessons have been learned which are worth indicating.

People are much more willing to implement plans that they had a part in developing. Therefore, as many elements within the organization as possible should be involved in the Corporate Planning process.

The most effective Corporate Plans are developed without regard to organizational lines. This provides full flexibility in planning changes to missions, functions, and services.

It is imperative that a planning conference or planning workshop of some type be held at least annually to reenergize the planning system within the organization and keep the Corporate Planning process from becoming stagnant. The organization should budget for this planning conference to be held out of town and away from job and family interruptions. Participants are usually less defensive and more relaxed when they are away from the office environment.

END

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